

Summer 1940

# The Growth of Elementary and Secondary Education In Russell County, Kansas

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THE GROWTH OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY  
EDUCATION IN RUSSELL COUNTY, KANSAS

being

A thesis presented to the Graduate Faculty  
of Fort Hays Kansas State College  
in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the  
Degree of Master  
of Science

by

Elmer L. Dougherty, B. S. in Education  
Fort Hays Kansas State College

Approved

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Date

August 1, 1940

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Chmn. Graduate Council

## A C K N O W L E D G M E N T

The author wishes to express his gratitude for the wise counsel and kindly criticism given by Dr. R. T. McGrath, Department of Education, and Dr. F. B. Streeter, Librarian, Fort Hays Kansas State College. He is deeply indebted to the entire staff of the College Library at Hays, to the County Superintendent of Russell County, Hobart Jackson, to the State Historical Society, and to the State Department of Education, for the time and courtesy that each has given him in this study.

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## I N T R O D U C T I O N

Too often we are prone to accept the benefits of a democracy without considering them in their relationship to the whole of our existence. It is true that education has become a standard part of every child's development, but this fact has not been clearly considered in the growth of our social and political institutions. There is little effort made to record the growth of our elementary and secondary schools.

Throughout this work we shall carry one phase of the growth of education as it applies to a restricted geographical area. We must note from the beginning that the available material is very fragmentary even in a country whose existence spans only slightly more than half a century. No attempt was made by school administrators to keep an accurate history of their school systems. Records have been lost or misplaced. As a result, at this date it is impossible to clearly picture every part of the whole educational system within this restricted area, but the evidence which is still available indicates very definite trends which have occurred in the growth of public education in Russell County.

Perhaps it is a part of the individualism which is characteristic of rural America, but the fact is evident that in rural districts least is accurately known about the school of yesterday.

One who undertakes such a study as this cannot but be encouraged by the graciousness and courtesy shown by those from whom requests for time and materials must be made. Should this thesis seem incomplete, the fault lies with the investigator or in the scantiness of the records available. The cooperation of individuals has been extremely admirable.

## CHAPTER I

## Background

In the northwestern part of the state of Kansas in the third tier of counties south of the Nebraska border and the sixth tier east of the Colorado boundary line is located Russell County. The county is a square 30 miles each way, containing 576,000 acres. On the east it is bounded by Lincoln and Ellsworth Counties, on the north by Osborne, on the west by Ellis, and on the south by Barton. The establishment of the county was originally due to the growth and development of the Kansas and Pacific Railroad which was built through the central part of the county in 1868.<sup>1</sup>

The county was named in 1867 in honor of Alva P. Russell of the Second Kansas Cavalry. It was attached to Ellsworth County in 1868 for judicial and administrative purposes.

The county was organized and began to function as a separate political subdivision of the state in 1872.<sup>2</sup> This rolling prairie county with its long stretches of treeless expanse is not too inviting to the eye. It is undulating

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1. A. T. Andreas, History of the State of Kansas. p. 1283.
  2. F. W. Blackmar, Ed., Kansas Historical Encyclopedia. p. 614.

prairie with few streams. For miles there is neither tree nor bush to vary the monotony of the wind swept plains.

Two streams, the Saline River and the Smoky Hill River, provide the only real source of water to the county. The former enters at the northwest edge of the county and flows east draining the northern section of the region, while the latter drains the southern half of the county in its eastward course. These small rivers with their tributaries, mostly small creeks which are dry during the summer, are dotted with sparse clumps of timber. This fact serves only to add to the otherwise desolate appearance of the landscape.

The bottom lands, which comprise approximately twenty per cent of the county, are composed of clay and sandy loam. The valleys are bordered by rather steep, high bluffs.

There are, in addition, various types of geological deposits which are both interesting and valuable. Limestone, potter's clay, a fair quality of coal, and oil constitute the mineral resources of the county. Economically, the latter looms significant in the area.

The state of Kansas, as it is now known, seems to have offered little attraction to settlement after the visit of the Spaniard Francisco Coronado in 1541.<sup>1</sup> For nearly two

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1. F. W. Blackmar, Ed., Kansas Historical Encyclopedia.  
p. 615.

hundred years the territory lay uninhabited. The French made a few settlements along the eastern border. The Americans penetrated the area in 1800 with a few scattered settlements.<sup>1</sup>

The evidence is not very conclusive, but it appears that in 1724 Bougemont came into the area embraced by Russell County.<sup>2</sup> It is certain that Fremont, on his expedition west, camped within the present confines of the county. Because of its flatness and dryness this region offered little problem to the explorer, who could traverse it without encountering serious hindrance or other reason for tarrying.

Politically, the history of Russell County has been interesting though not spectacular. After the early settlement of the county in 1871, the organization of the region as a political unit occurred the following year. Two towns fought for the honor as County Seat. In the election Bunkerhill apparently defeated its rival, Russell, but the seal was never given to the victor.<sup>3</sup> In court contests and additional elections Russell triumphed and became the seat of the county government. Thus, the advance of Russell marked the retrogression of Bunkerhill. In political structure the county follows the commission plan

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1. A. T. Andreas, History of the State of Kansas. p. 44-45.
  2. J. C. Ruppenthal, Russell Record, July 14, 1876.
  3. A. T. Andreas, History of the State of Kansas. p. 1284.



of government with three commissioners elected for a period of 4 years. One is elected at one election. Two years later two members are next elected. Thus, the organization is continuous.

The county received its name from Alva P. Russell, Captain of Company K, second Kansas Cavalry, who died December 12, 1862, near Prairie Grove, Arkansas, in a field hospital as a result of wounds in one of the battles of the War between the States.<sup>1</sup>

After the process of naming the county and locating the seat of government, it became necessary to choose officers for the first term. The temporary officers for 1872 were J. L. Himes, County Clerk, J. W. Corbett, John Dodge, and E. B. Durkey, County Commissioners, and Stillmann Mann, Justice of the Peace.<sup>2</sup> The first election for permanent officers occurred on September 9, 1872, with the successful candidates being John Fritts, John Dodge, and Benjamin Pratt, commissioners; E. W. Durkey, clerk; John Himminger, sheriff; L. Langdon, treasurer; H. J. Connell, probate judge; J. C. Hibbard, superintendent of public instruction; and R. Kennedy, recorder of deeds.<sup>3</sup>

The early settlers were attracted to the region of Russell County by the possibilities of agriculture and

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1. Kansas State Historical Transactions, 1903-1904. p. 32-35.

2. Ibid.

3. A. T. Andreas, History of the State of Kansas. p. 1284.

mining. The Kansas and Pacific Railroad, later the Union Pacific, had built its lines through the region during the last years of the sixties. This railroad company brought along men to cut wood and supply labor for construction purposes. These men, however, did not settle.

It remained for the farmer, the miner, and the stock raiser to form the nucleus of the future population of the county. The stock raiser chose sheep as the most likely cash product. By 1880 there were more than twenty thousand sheep in the county, but they were displaced within the next decade by cattle, a more hardy and profitable investment.<sup>1</sup> By 1910 sheep had dwindled to only one thousand head, while cattle had risen to more than thirty-three thousand in numbers. Nor was this the only form of agricultural enterprise; the first actual farming was done on six hundred acres in 1872.<sup>2</sup> By 1882 there were 214,260 acres in production, and by 1910 the acreage had risen to 443,062 of a total land cultivation of 576,000 acres. This land was devoted to the raising of farm products, whose value in 1910 was \$3,355,929.00. Cattle for slaughter brought an income to the farmer of \$395,143.00. Corn brought a cash income to Russell County producers of \$667,851.00. Wheat earned \$1,716,040.00. Oats brought \$45,680.00 to the farmer. Tame

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1. F. W. Blackmar, Ed., Kansas Historical Encyclopedia.  
p. 615.

2. Ibid.



grass brought \$85,689.00, wild grass \$79,905.00, poultry and eggs \$99,904.00, butter \$39,685.00, and milk \$55,515.00.<sup>1</sup> All contributed their part in making the residents of Russell County far more wealthy in 1910 than the average throughout the state. The average wealth per capita in the county was \$2308.<sup>2</sup>

Due largely to agriculture the county enjoyed a steady, though not rapid, increase in population. In 1870 there were one hundred fifty-six men living within the area--mostly miners working for the railroad. In 1875 the population was estimated at 1212, which declined sharply during the next year as a result of the plague of locusts which infested that part of the state. By 1880 the population was listed at 6321, while the 1910 registration shows 10,800 people living in Russell County.<sup>3</sup> Property valuation had risen, too, until by 1910 it reached the total of \$24,929,442.00.

In all probability, 1910 is the most satisfactory year for judging the agricultural wealth of Russell County. Prior to the insane boom which came with the World War, and devoid of the drought and depression which have harassed agriculture since the War, this year was rather a normal

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1. F. W. Blackmar, Kansas Historical Encyclopedia. Vol. 2, p. 615.
  2. Ibid.
  3. Ibid.

year for the farmer. Since 1910 the chance of a good crop has seemed less certain. The cash income has fluctuated widely. In short, agriculture is no longer the certain livelihood that it was in 1910. Wheat still looms large in the cash income crops of the county, but myriads of grasshoppers and the searing rays of the sun have tended to remove corn as an effective source of income. Cattle are still raised in quantities, but the demand for wheat land over shadowed them in the constant search for more speedy profits.

Nor in the last two decades of the nineteenth century was agriculture the only source of revenue. A few grist mills sprang up along the banks of the streams. Miners picked in the earth's bosom for coal, which was fairly abundant along the eastern edge of the county. These occupations are now of relatively little importance in comparison with the two major enterprises agriculture and oil.<sup>1</sup>

Thus, when the twelve unequal townships, in area, namely, Big Creek, Center, Fairfield, Fairview, Lincoln, Luray, Paradise, Plymouth, Russell, Waldo, Winterset, and Grant, were separated from Ellsworth County to comprise Russell County, a most valuable resource was lost to the former and gained by the latter as a source of revenue. Land leasing began in 1917 for the hunt for "black gold." The first venture

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1. Bulletin No. 10. State University of Kansas. "Geology of Russell County, Kansas." p. 12.

proved unsuccessful, and it was not until 1923 that successful drilling began under the direction of the M. N. Valerius Company, Tulsa, Oklahoma.<sup>1</sup> The first successful well produced only one hundred seventy-five barrels daily. It was located near Paradise and still operates. In 1939 the pace had not slackened for Russell County had 1143 active wells producing an average of nearly two hundred thousand barrels annually.<sup>2</sup> A year later this number had increased to 1530.<sup>3</sup> This makes oil a tremendously significant producer of wealth in the county.

As the railroad moved westward, it was only natural that it should bring with it numerous settlers. Thus, in 1867 when the Kansas and Pacific Railroad came through Russell County, it brought pioneers who sought a new home. The War between the States had loosed a vast quantity of man power which had to be settled on the western plains. It was not difficult to imagine, then, why people came westward into the arid regions of Kansas. In July, 1869, A. E. Matthews and Mr. Mattleman came to the county to try their hand at mining. They did not remain permanently. During the same year seven section hands had been attacked by Indians. Two workers were killed, but none of the

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1. Bulletin No. 10. State University of Kansas. "Geology of Russell County, Kansas." p. 13.
  2. Walter A. Ver Wiebe, Bulletin. State University of Kansas, State Geological Survey. "Western Kansas Oil Production Since 1938." p. 77-84.
  3. Russell Record. July 6, 1940.

railroad hands became settlers. In 1870 a party of hunters seems to have trapped and hunted over the county, but Christopher Harshbarger receives credit for the first permanent residence in the county when he established his home near East Wolf Creek in 1869.<sup>1</sup>

During that year a colony of immigrants moved into Russell County to establish permanent homes. The first land title was a deed for the east one-half of section twenty-seven of township thirteen of range fourteen west of the sixth principal meridian. In April, 1871, the transfer from the Kansas and Pacific Railroad to the founders of Russell occurred.<sup>2</sup> During the same month, the first colonists of the Northwest Colony Association, Ripon, Wisconsin, arrived at Fossil Station, renamed Russell. This association conducted its business through five trustees, of which B. Pratt was chairman and president. The land was given to the colonists by the railroad and was subsequently divided into lots. The uninhabited prairie received its first building when Mr. Tustin and Mr. Stillman erected a wooden structure sixteen feet square to serve as a house and boarding house for the car dwelling colonists. Three frame fitted houses were brought to the location during that first year. Mr. Tustin brought goods and set up a business establishment

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1. R. T. Fowler. History of Wolf Creek. p. 116.

2. Land Deed to Northwest Colony Association. Documents Division, U. P. Museum, Omaha, Nebraska.

for himself. By the end of the year there were two hundred settlers, some venturing to settle north of Wolf Creek. A frame school house was erected during the first year. The town grew slowly, plagued by locusts and drought, and fought for two years to gain its present status as county seat. Throughout the struggle, Russell refused to give the seal of government to Bunkerhill. In 1873 its right to the position which it now occupies was sustained by the Supreme Court.<sup>1</sup> Since then, it has grown until today Russell is the principal city in the county. It is the only second class city in the county. Without doubt, it is the most important city in the county, though in the early days this right was severely challenged by Bunkerhill.

In the same year settlers from Ohio moved into the present town of Bunkerhill. For a time this prospective city carried on a heated controversy with Russell for the seat of the county government. Located as it is on the railroad twelve miles from the eastern edge of the county, it appeared to have a good chance to survive under the guiding spirit of Mr. Harvel and Mr. Corbett. The battle went against the little city, and its retrogression set in during 1873. It then boasted three stores and a two-story stone school house.<sup>2</sup> Its principal defect is a shortage of

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1. F. W. Blackmar, Kansas Historical Encyclopedia. Vol. 2, p. 615.
  2. Ibid.



water. For a long time water was hauled into the town, but a well near the edge of town supplies part of this deficiency with a hard water which is not too satisfactory. Today the town is just one of the many villages which dot the prairies of Kansas. It carries on and provides a satisfactory education and home for its boys and girls, but its once proud dream of a large city has been discarded. It seems just a bit strange that two towns started at the same time under almost identical conditions should have such different courses as these two in Russell County.

At the time the railroad was located, Dorrance was settled. It is a town seventeen miles east of Russell near the Smoky Hill River. In 1910 it had a population of 281. It has remained small throughout the years.<sup>1</sup>

Gorham was laid out by E. D. Gorham, after whom it was named. The founder gave lots for building purposes, but despite this fact the town has grown little since 1878, the time of its founding.<sup>2</sup>

In 1887 the Union Town Site Company planned a project called Ivanmar after Miss Iva Mar. Ambitious dreams or advertising propaganda caused the name to be changed later to Paradise. Even with this auspicious beginning, the town has remained relatively unimportant.<sup>3</sup>

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1. F. W. Blackmar, Kansas Historical Encyclopedia. p. 534.
  2. Ibid.
  3. R. T. Fowler, History of Wolf Creek. p. 116.

Two more towns were among those established early north and northeast of Russell along the railroad. They are Lucas and Waldo, whose populations are even now very small.

Other towns will be discussed in connection with their school systems, but these are the principal towns which were established before 1910.<sup>1</sup>

In the rural areas no decided population trend can be noted save that one large colony of Russians migrated to the colony and settled as farmers during the early days. Their descendants still till the land.

This, then, is Russell County with its sources of wealth, its size and location, its people, and its few towns. These are the people who found themselves struggling with the proposition of education for their young. In the main they were a farming folk who came to a dry country to try to make a living from a none too willing soil through direct attack upon the land or by stock raising. While the rains came and before the madness to grow more and more wheat seized them, they succeeded admirably in acquiring a good living and making their county comparatively wealthy. The war and the drought have done much to ravage agriculture. Normal rainfall and normal markets may revive this source of wealth. Oil, however, has supplanted agriculture as a principal

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1. D. W. Wilder, Annals of Kansas. p. 212.

source of wealth. A new class of family has been thrust upon the schools for education. The workers in the oil fields, no less than the sons of farmers must be trained. Next we shall examine the schools, their founding, growth, courses of study, teacher training, and their place in the social life of the community of which they are so vital a part.



## C H A P T E R    I I

## Elementary and Graded Schools

With the entry of Kansas into the Union it was necessary for Congress to make adequate provision for the school lands. Prior to this time the Federal Government had followed a benevolent policy which set aside one or more sections in each township for school land. In the territorial organization of Kansas this same policy was followed. "And be it further enacted that when the lands in the said territories shall be surveyed under the Government of the United States preparatory to bringing the same in, sections sixteen and thirty-six in each township and the same being hereby reserved for the purpose of being applied to the schools in the territory and in the state."<sup>1</sup> Thus the Federal Government aids by providing an impetus to education in the infant territories as they were established.

As its territorial organization progressed, being started in 1854, Kansas found the pressing problem of education constantly a part of the legislative tasks which

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1. D. W. Wilder, Annals of Kansas, 1541-1885. p. 1253.

piled high during those critical days before the Civil War. As the territory, and later when it was admitted to the Union as the thirty-fourth state, Kansas took certain definite steps forward in the field of education.

Prior to its formation as a territory the Jesuits came into Kansas to convert the Indians. Little is known of their work or their success in this venture. In 1844 a school for white children was established at Kansas City. In 1855 a free school was established at Lawrence. In 1857 a Territorial Superintendent was appointed to look after school lands, but very little more than this was done by the Congress. In 1860 Townships were to be divided into districts with three teachers for each township and one inspector. Despite these beginnings the schools remained in 1861 Subscription Schools without state aid. A one-mill tax was authorized in 1861, and 1862 found twenty-eight<sup>1</sup> county reports sent to the State Superintendent's Office.

Education had not progressed far beyond this early stage when Russell County was organized officially in 1872. The office of County Superintendent served as a convenient clearing house, but his influence was not too important. From this point, let us examine the county in its educational aspects, since each of the County Superintendents authorized the establishment of districts for the establish-

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1. Paul Monroe, Encyclopedia of Education. III, p. 1221-1225.

ment of new schools.

The creation of school districts was accomplished in two general ways. First, it was possible for the inhabitants of an undistricted area, or a district wishing to be separated from another, to so signify to the county superintendent. If, in his judgment, this seemed expedient, he could order a redistricting. This process occasionally led to appeals to the state superintendent or even to court action. Usually the county superintendent was upheld. Second, "It shall be his (county superintendent) duty to divide the county into a convenient number of districts, and to alter them when the best interests demand, but no district shall be reduced more than two per cent. If any county is imperfectly districted, he shall redistrict, number, and file the papers."<sup>1</sup>

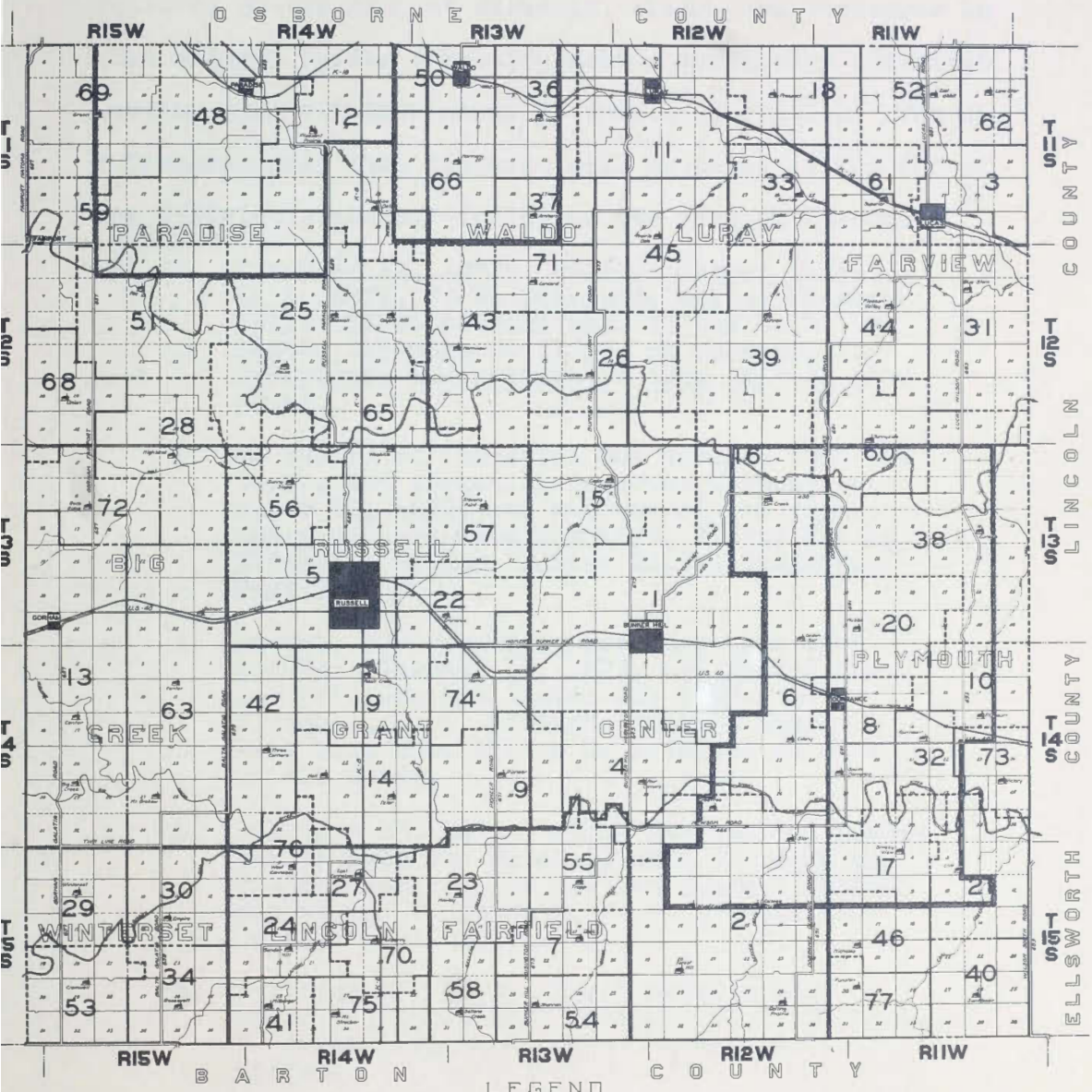
This process of districting consisted of publishing the notices of formation in three public places two weeks, later five days, before the election. After the election, officers were chosen by the voters. The successful candidates were required to send notices of acceptance to the county superintendent who then filed them and announced the formation of the district. It is significant to note that many of the names of district officers have been lost or never filed.

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1. State Superintendent, Compilation of School Laws of Kansas. 1871. p. 248.



SCHOOL DISTRICT MAP  
OF  
RUSSELL COUNTY KANSAS



Placed on County Engineer's Office  
January 1927

- |                       |                             |
|-----------------------|-----------------------------|
| STATE HIGHWAYS        | RURAL HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICTS |
| COUNTY ROADS          | SECTION LINES               |
| TOWNSHIP ROADS        | SCHOOL HOUSE                |
| RAILROADS             | TOWNSHIP BOUNDARIES         |
| SCHOOL DISTRICT LINES |                             |

Prepared by: *[Signature]*

The following pages contain information concerning the date of formation of each school district in Russell County, followed by the name of director, clerk, and treasurer in that order. Unless otherwise noted, acceptance and first meeting come within a month of date of formation. Unusual information for each district will be noted at the end of the district statement following the name of treasurer.<sup>1</sup>

1. December 12, 1872. William Harper Biays, J. A. Poff, J. N. Dollison, all of Bunkerhill. First meeting held at the K. P. RR. Depot, December 27, 1872, at Bunkerhill. Acceptance was written in long hand on note paper.
2. No record of formation but assumed that the notice and formation occurred between December 12, 1872, and the end of the year. Board members were for 1872, Julius Bishop, Elizabeth Bishop, Daniel Dilts, Bunkerhill Post Office.
3. No date for formation but must have been between December 12, 1872, and year's end, for officers are listed for 1872. A. A. Birsdall, L. L. Hibbard, Emily Hibbard. East Wolf Office is given as address of all three.
4. February 17, 1873. First meeting and acceptances received March 8, from the home of Michael Kepler, the meeting place. Michael Kepler, R. V. Kennedy, R. T. Foster, Bunkerhill Post Office.
5. February 17, 1873. First meeting held March 31, in Russell School. H. T. Cornell, B. Pratt, Jennie E. Cole, Russell Post Office.

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1. County Superintendent's Official Records, 1871-1940.

6. March 8, 1873. First meeting held at the home of James G. Weakley, March 27, 4 p.m. J. G. Weakley, William B. Himes, Jonas Heiges, Bunkerhill Post Office.
7. June 10, 1873. Benjamin W. Goodhee, James Sellens, Horace Sellens, Bunkerhill Post Office. Notice of place of meeting missing.
8. September 28, 1873. A. W. Slusser, Amos Bailey, Joseph Winebrenner, Bunkerhill Post Office.
9. No date, but acceptance received October 15, 1873. Daniel C. Winfield, W. F. Bouldin, E. Nichols. Address missing.
10. January 10, 1874. First meeting February 14, 1874. Michael Bolan, John Dillinger, William S. Miller, Bosland Post Office, Ellsworth County.
11. January 12, First meeting February 7. George Landis, Post Office Grand Center, Osborne County, E. O. Church, David Schurr, both of Bunkerhill.
12. February 12, 1873, a joint district was attempted with Osborne County but declared illegal. By petition the district was revised but neither date of formation nor first meeting was given. A. W. Roberts, Pleasant Hill, Osborne County, William J. Fuller, F. W. Turner, addresses not given.
13. May, though probably this should be April 16, for meeting was held May 7, acceptances returned June 28 after the first meeting. J. C. Preston, Russell, Eli Sperry, Robert R. Thomas. Addresses missing.
14. February 20, 1875. This district was not organized but reformed January 19, 1878. E. W. Durkee, Russell, L. H. Marchardt, W. S. Ross. No addresses.
15. Notices February 12, no election held, in accordance with law new notices issued February 26. Not posted, hence new ones March 1, S. Missimer, W. McKenna, Thomas McKenna, Bunkerhill Post Office.

16. February 20, 1877. First meeting February 26. B. Gardner, Leslie Stoddard, W. G. Holton, Bunkerhill.
17. February 14, 1877, formation declared void because of failure to post notices properly. December 1, reissued notices appealed to the County Commissioners by Isac Tobin, Superintendent upheld. No officers listed for 1878, W. J. Gaines, G. W. Neff, J. M. Brown, 1879.
18. March 24, 1877. William L. Bronson, J. W. Hill, George Thomas, Luray.
19. December 18, 1877, no officers for 1877, 1878, and only one for 1879, G. T. Robinson, Clerk.
20. January 1, 1878. No officers given, but 1879 found John Rielly, F. A. Coleman, W. H. Bars, Dorance.
21. January 18, 1878, no officers, 1879. V. Sidwell, E. W. Kirby, John Dodge, Wilson.
22. February 16, 1878, meeting held in May after district nine had appealed the separation but the separation was upheld by the commissioners. Officers were J. Eddy, C. B. Curtis, M. Fox, Russell.
23. February 28, 1878. Meeting held in May. Joe Stevens, F. Cone, Appointed Samuel Maharze.
24. July 20, 1878. Officers listed for 1879. Adam Duty, William Dilling, Johannes Lohman.
25. July 24, 1878, J. G. McKenna, H. G. Hunting, Bonhoff, no initial or name given. All of Russell.
26. August 24, 1878. Appeal taken by fifteen residents but rejected by the commissioners. First meeting October 7, 1878. B. F. Briton elected clerk.
27. August 22, 1878, meeting held October, 9, H. C. Gilmore, Russell, Fred Mitchell, H. J. Gifford, both from Kennebec.



28. November 30, meeting January 9, 1889, C. Wolcott, Clerk; H. L. McKinney, Treasurer; Russell.
29. December 7, 1878, A. J. McCracken, A. E. Waite, Joseph Allen, Russell.
30. January 9, 1879, W. A. Shahan, W. S. Shahan, J. W. Couray.
31. March 17, 1879, H. L. McAdams, Blue Stem, N. R. Cowan, Vern Blair, Blue Stem.
32. June 4, 1879, J. Forest, Forest Hill, J. McGinnis, A. Woodward, was disorganized and attached to district 2, 1880.
33. July 7, 1879, Summerville, East Wolf Creek, Bryan, LaGrange, no initials given for either, James A. Williamson, no address given.
34. July 4, 1879, J. Hafner, S. Harrison, G. Harrison, Bartondale.
35. April 9, 1879, joint district with Ellis County, James Gibbs, J. M. McGibbon, E. J. Nichols, Gorham.
36. July 7, 1879, George Stryker, Wyckoff, Charles S. Wyckoff, Wyckoff, Wilson S. Waters, Luray. In this acceptance as in that for district one the county's name is spelled Rufsell.
37. July 7, 1879, A. Bratton, appointed, October 20, 1879, elected H. Leighton, Wyckoff, Clerk, J. F. Merchant.
38. July 24, 1879, George Matthews, Bunkerhill, S. M. Palmer, Wilson, Ella Brown, Bunkerhill.
39. August 5, 1879, Alrin Luty, Clerk.
40. August 6, 1879, James Marsh, C. F. Crawford, S. K. Hurd, Wilson.
41. August 16, 1879, George Neuce, Bartondale and Russell, T. A. Marvel, William Sawfornty, Bartondale.
42. September 1, 1879, appealed by district fourteen, Superintendent sustained by the commissioners. First meeting was October 15, Otto Laubman, Brown, James Freed.



43. October 9, 1879, Jim Guiley, C. D. Finch, John Mills.
44. July 18, 1880, William Jones, E. Hutchinson, no treasurer.
45. November 9, 1879, C. B. Zeed, Ed Clawson, John Kuhler.
46. November 7, 1879, no officers listed.
47. November 20, 1879, disorganized 1884, attached to district 59, joint Ellis-Russell County district, officers 1880, D. D. Hopper, C. Ward, D. V. Kaldwell.
48. January 27, 1880, boundary altered within next month, A. A. Houser, R. S. Jack, A. N. Wiles.
49. January 29, 1880, Charles Thomas, J. V. Pitt, H. Lancaster.
50. March 11, 1880, A. Michael, W. W. Elder, J. K. Pangborn.
51. April 10, 1880, no officers listed.
52. Missing.
53. April 15, 1880, A. W. Snider, J. H. Hollan, G. H. Smith.
54. April 12, 1880, F. W. Brink, E. P. Siger, A. Shannon.
55. April 15, 1880, D. B. Frick, D. Brookheart, Jacob Hupfer.
56. April 15, 1880, Henry Ravner, Jerome Smith, W. H. Scribner.
57. May 31, 1880, G. Snyder, I. N. Jackson, A. S. Eaton.
58. June 12, 1880, Horace Sellens, W. V. Palmeter, W. H. Beck.
59. June 13, 1880, joint Russell-Ellis County district, notice of boundary change September 20, 1884, no appeal, L. Smith, Woodward, C. B. Toole.

60. November 13, 1880, S. E. Cooper, B. Taylor, W. W. Lucy.
61. February 10, 1881, J. A. Frances, S. Shurley, J. L. Brown.
62. April 28, 1881, this notice bears no signature. Martin Davis, T. E. Sperry, Henry Dormony.
63. October 25, 1880, organization later held incomplete, W. W. Cook, George Baldwin, Marshall Shaw.
64. Missing.
65. March 28, 1887, J. B. Kenyas, Carrie Burtcher, A. Wilson.
66. August 4, 1888, Frank Houghton, J. K. Pangborn, Marshall Leeke.
67. October 17, 1888, Samuel Johnson, Norman Webb, Martha Pospichil.
68. April 13, 1889, first meeting held at the house of Mr. McKinley who posted the notice of the meeting, Isaac Betts, D. D. Bradley, G. J. Ginther.
69. September 8, 1891, notice posted by Aaron Green with first meeting held at the school, John Meyer, H. M. Durham, J. B. Perry.
70. February 4, 1893, notices posted by J. F. Durham, meeting held at the house of J. F. Dirshen, E. H. Wolfe, E. M. Entarfer, J. W. F. Nelson.
71. June 29, 1907, posted by Jacob Bian, meeting held July 18, but adjourned without transacting any business, held August 12 at the home of Jacob Bian who was elected director, William McKenna, Clerk, E. E. Girton, Treasurer.
72. June 11, 1908, posted by W. I. Moore, Meeting held at the school, John Dakant, I. Moore, N. C. Moore.
73. April 13, 1909, posted by D. C. Steinle, meetin at John Fisher's home, postponed till May 8, John Fisher, D. C. Steinle, Will Whitmer.
74. December 26, 1913, Dell Stewart, Henry Whitman, Fred Dumbert.

75. August 10, 1916, John Schneider, George C. Becker, Fred Schneider.
76. August 29, 1916, notices posted by Mrs. F. O. Mitchell, meeting held at Kennebec School, C. H. Baldwin, F. A. Mitchell, Harry Krug.
77. August 25, 1917, notices posted by James H. Driscoll, Jr., first meeting held at the home of Mr. Driscoll, Dan Driscoll, Mrs. James H. Driscoll, George Mog.<sup>1</sup>

Such a wide diversity existed between the various schools of the county in the early days that no general statement can be made without providing grounds for serious criticism. In all probability Mrs. Swan taught the first school in Russell County at the home of Reverend Annis. Her pupils paid a subscription fee of two dollars for a three months term of education. When the county school system was formally organized, Russell boasted a school house.

By popular ballot the immigrants who arrived at Fossil Station, named Russell, chose a committee to report on the erection of a frame school building. "This committee recommended a structure which cost three hundred eighty dollars." In 1873 Frances C. Harrick taught the school after Mrs. Swan's school had been disbanded. The new school was doubtless, though no evidence is available in the county to prove it, another short term subscription school. There was probably no property tax for school maintenance, but each student, assuming that this school was similar to that

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1. Records of the Office of County Superintendent, Russell County, Russell, Kansas, 1871-1940.

of other communities, paid two dollars for the three month term.<sup>1</sup>

In 1871 the school law was very lax. The state compilation for that year indicates that the schools were to teach only orthography (spelling), reading, writing, English grammar, and arithmetic.

Still other factors made it possible for a greater divergence to exist in the curriculum than the limited subject matter would indicate. On the petition of fifty students of free holders in the district German might be taught in the school. In fact almost any subject was a possible teaching unit in the schools of the county or state. The school boards were given great discretion in selecting subjects to be taught. These same boards, composed largely of laymen, selected the texts for the schools. They determined the length of the school year subject only to the restriction from the state that a school month should consist of twenty days of six hours of school time each. With these three great differences for possible choice it is not surprising that no statements can be made as generalizations on the early schools. Subjects differed, texts were not uniform, and the length of the year was not fixed by law.<sup>2</sup> The average days of school for the whole of Kansas from 1870-1881 was 116, while from 1880-1889 it reached 120. With these

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1. J. C. Ruppenthal, Kansas Educators' Year Book. February 1, 1934. p. 44-60.

2. Ibid.

conditions existing among the students, was the condition of the instructor any better?

The law in 1871 prescribed only that teachers should be certified by an examining board of three members of which one was to be the County Superintendent.

They were, of course, to be of good moral character, but little attention beyond this could be given, especially in lieu of the pay which the average instructor received. More consideration will be given this phase as we examine the individual school histories.

Some attempt was made to improve the intellectual level of the teachers, for State Superintendent H. D. McCarthy, in 1871, records in his compilation of school laws for that year that teachers' institutes--

are to be held in each judicial district with the superintendent presiding over each. County institutes are to be held in every county with fifteen or more schools. Over these the county superintendent shall preside. Teachers will be expected to attend without loss of pay on days during which their schools will be closed.<sup>1</sup>

One of these institutes in Russell County, commencing August 8, 1874, and ending September 2, had classes in natural philosophy, bookkeeping, English grammar, geography, didactics, physiology, U. S. Constitution, arithmetic, U. S. history, reading, orthography, ortheopy, and writing. Forty-nine enrollees, whose ages ranged from sixteen to

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1. H. D. McCarthy, School Laws of Kansas. Topeka, 1871. p.24.



over forty, participated. F. D. Fitzpatrick and Amandus Fisher were the instructors. The pamphlet does not indicate the city in which the meeting occurred, but it suggests that it was successful.<sup>1</sup>

The first glimpse that we find of present day active school workers is in the Russell County Institute of 1885. During this summer institute sixty-one pupils enrolled. Superintendent Bickerdyke was the conductor with W. S. Picken the instructor. Among the names of those attending were E. O. Humes and George Mahoney, both active in Bunkerhill school affairs today.<sup>2</sup>

That this makeshift method of training teachers beyond their regular education was not successful is evident in the recommendations of Superintendent McCarthy, State Superintendent of Public Instruction, who sent out a proposed method of teaching and a course of study in 1873.

Because of the inefficiency of our schools, the following recommendations are proposed. In writing, the child should copy the word or letter from a place on which it has been made, then he should copy the names of objects while looking at the object.<sup>3</sup>

In arithmetic the proposal was to use pebbles in adding and subtracting. The process consisted of a logically organized

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1. State Superintendent of Public Instruction, County Normal Institutes. Topeka, 1875. p. 17.
  2. County Superintendent, Russell County, Official Records. Russell, 1885. p. 1.
  3. H. D. McCarthy, Recommended Course of Study. Topeka, 1873, Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction.

group of facts which were made into a routine. Thus the emphasis was upon drill. The day was to be divided into ten minute periods. Each subject was to be taught during that time. In the advance grades the course recommended history, science, singing, and moral lessons in addition to the regular program. The advance grades appear to have been the fifth grade and any above it that might be available for students.<sup>1</sup> Yearly examinations were suggested along with satisfactory text books, but no evidence has been educed that the latter suggestion was considered seriously by the boards of education in the county.

Ruppenthal suggests that most of the students studied only reading in the beginning with spelling and arithmetic receiving some attention. By the end of the seventies or early eighties grading began in Russell County. The introduction of United States history, geography, grammar, and physiology seem to have begun about the same time. There was no uniform course of studies until Superintendent Bickerdyke made a serious attempt to formulate one during his regime from 1889-1897. The Illinois course of studies was used. The School of Vernacular took the primary, intermediate, and advanced grades as its major divisions instead of the Primer, First Reader, Second Reader, etc. By 1890 the ideal

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1. H. D. McCarthy, Recommended Course of Study. Topeka, 1873.

was graduation from the eighth grade with some rural schools and most town schools providing a ninth grade and later a three year high school course.

With the new arrangement the principal tended more and more to be known as the City Superintendent, while the principal became a subordinate officer.<sup>1</sup> In Russell County even in 1890 most of the classes were in reading despite the advancement suggested. Only the most advanced schools in the county carried out the program as outlined.

Records on teaching personnel are inadequate, but Ruppenthal states that there were twenty-five listed in Russell County in 1881, but there were doubtless more instructors whose names did not appear on his records.<sup>2</sup> The number of districts would indicate that there must have been other teachers than the number listed. The teachers who were available had only an eighth grade education for the most part. In a few cases they attended Saline, Emporia, or Great Bend Normal Schools.

In the eighties the Parochial school came to the county. German-speaking schools were established. In some, Catechism was taught as a regular part of the instruction during the week. When the teaching of German was discontinued during the World War, the schools disappeared for the most part.

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1. J. C. Ruppenthal, Kansas Educators' Year Book. February 1, 1934. p. 44-60.
  2. Ibid., p.63.



proposal. The next year the structure was completed and thirty-five pupils received instruction.

In 1875 the practice of providing free textbooks was introduced into Bunkerhill's school. In 1879 the school term was lengthened to nine months with primary grades attending only six months of the year. In 1880 four teachers were added to the staff, though their names have been lost. By 1881 graduation was occurring in "high school," though this may mean only the advanced grades. Stagecraft was introduced in order to provide school entertainments at this time. In 1887 one hundred fifty pupils were reported enrolled in the school. In 1898 the first school burned and was replaced by the present structure. In the grades the Bunkerhill school system has followed the usual trend of more and more participation by the students. Its work is now comparable to the best in the county.<sup>1</sup>

Unlike Bunkerhill, Russell's grade school history is incomplete and very unsatisfactory. We know that the system was opened on March 4, 1873, but there is no record of enrollment, length of term, or teaching personnel for nearly a decade.<sup>2</sup> The original colonizers built a frame building at a cost of \$380 for a school in 1873. The length of term was probably not more than three months for a pupil

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1. Bunkerhill High School. Senior Class. The Daisy, 1916.
  2. District Clerk's Report, District No. 5, Russell County, 1874.

subscription of two dollars. The first enrollment figures are given for 1878 when thirty-eight students were attending schools, but no administrative records are available until 1881. No other information was available from the school or the County Superintendent. There are now 1210 students enrolled in the Russell School System.

In February, 1873, the Lucas school system launched its career in education. Though the system was organized, it did not officially open till three years later. Elena Pratt, Bunkerhill, was the first teacher. The school building was located on the Everly farm. This structure was sold in 1884, and another wooden building served for five years. In 1889 a stone building was constructed with the fifth to eighth grades inclusive upstairs. In 1901 two more rooms were added at a cost of \$16,000. In 1912 a new eight room building was erected. The teachers for that year are listed as Wells, Miss Schripen, Miss McNerney, Smith, Fletcher, and Beedle.<sup>1</sup>

Luray or district 11 was organized on January 12, 1874, but no information concerning its enrollment is available for more than twenty years. O. E. Wheeler taught in 1897-1898, but there is no record of the enrollment. The school term in 1897-1898 was twenty-eight weeks. There were nine grades with only two students in the upper grade.<sup>2</sup>

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1. M. L. Kirby, Superintendent of Schools, Lucas. 1939.

2. M. H. Isaacson, Superintendent of Schools, Luray. 1939.

Paradise opened its grade school in 1880 but has no information to offer concerning its development, enrollment, or teaching personnel, though only three students had graduated from the eighth grade by 1900. In 1907 only three pupils were ready for high school, which was then of little importance.<sup>1</sup>

At Gorham the only Parochial school in the county, St. Mary's High School, was established in 1886, but no reports or records are available until 1923. There are sixty-four students now enrolled in the grade school which is located at Gorham.<sup>2</sup>

Beyond the dates of formation no other information was obtained from the other schools. District sixty-six reported no teacher until 1889 when Leona Smith received \$30 a month. Sixty-seven reports that Leona Smith had taught there in 1888 at \$25 a month. District seventy-one indicates Mary Miller as instructor in 1907 at \$40 a month. Zebina Wolfe is reported as teacher in district seventy-three in 1909 at \$50 a month. In 1913 Elsie Doyle is reported as instructor in district seventy-four at \$65 a month.

Only slightly more impressive is the set of figures for common school graduations from the Russell County schools for the years 1890-1903. In all, there were five hundred

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1. T. J. Mercer, Principal Paradise School. 1939.
  2. Father Nicholas Peters, Superintendent of St. Mary's School, Gorham. 1939.

sixty-six graduates in the thirteen year period with eight completing their education in 1890 and eighty-three in 1902. This indicates a marked trend toward more education for the children of the rural communities. This group of five hundred sixty-six constitutes the whole number of graduates for the county during a thirteen-year period.<sup>1</sup> This is not a very high portion of the population whose education was sufficient to warrant the belief that they could successfully direct the affairs of government.

It is surprising under these conditions that the schools have succeeded as well as they have. The school year was short; the facilities were negligible. Teachers were poorly trained, badly paid, and without successful methodology. It is difficult to evaluate the success of these grade schools, for the records, when kept at all, were improperly handled. The information concerning the high schools is somewhat more enlightening, for at least the names of the administrators are available.

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1. County Superintendent, Annual Compendium for Russell County, 1905. p. 7.

## CHAPTER III

## High Schools

Two kinds of high schools exist side by side in Russell County, the city schools which are found in the principal towns and the Rural High Schools which are operated for the farming population in the less populous areas. Their problems are similar to those of every school in this section. They are short on laboratory equipment. The teacher is expected to carry a load too great, in many cases, for her to handle. Each instructor must teach too many classes. The enrollment is not large, and the results are generally satisfactory. Depression has forced the heavy load upon the members of the faculty, but normal times would tend to alleviate the condition.

The high schools are governed by laymen who are not primarily educators, whose vision does not extend to the solution of educational problems. Values, in children, are not readily apparent and hence are frequently disregarded by the boards whose training has come from more individualistic periods. In terms of generosity the school boards cannot be ranked among our most magnanimous citizens. As tax payers these men feel keenly the pinch of tax exactions. Daily economic concerns are so pressing that



they sometimes force into the background or shunt aside the needs of the schools.

What is our task in this chapter? First, to present a historical background, in so far as possible, of the high schools. Second, to examine the integrating force of the secondary education system as it relates to the community as a whole. Third, to present statistical information dealing with the teaching profession. We shall list the terms of contracts, the salaries, and the changes in administrative policy which determine the course of the schools.

From The History of Kansas Schools and Their Tendencies we learn that in 1885 only one high school in the state was adequate to meet the entrance requirements of Kansas University.<sup>1</sup> High schools had been in existence prior to this date, but their courses were inadequate to meet the then existing function of secondary education, namely, preparation for college. Since this condition was true in the older counties, it is not surprising to note that the Russell County schools were just beginning their task of preparing the youth for entrance into the universities of the land. We should not be too quick to criticize these early high schools, for they were new and were performing a different task. As we pointed out previously, the ideal during the eighties was graduation from the eighth grade.

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1. Kansas Department of Education, History of Kansas Schools and Their Tendencies. 1885, p. 17.

Let us, then, trace briefly the growth of these institutions. It is difficult, if not impossible, to place a date on each apparent innovation. By the time the practice has become well established for the county as a whole, we shall indicate the new mode of progress.

Apparently, the first graduating class from Bunkerhill occurred in 1886 when six pupils received diplomas. In 1887 only one student completed his high school course. In 1916 there were eight graduates. In 1908 domestic science was introduced into the curriculum. Manual training began in 1914. In 1916 interschool competition in athletics was carried on by Bunkerhill with the other schools of the county. Contests in baseball, basketball for boys and girls, handball, and tennis were listed. Debating, too, was an extracurricular activity. Dramatics, singing groups, and even a Junior-Senior Banquet were among the social agencies. Classes in home economics and art were taught as well as the regular requirements for a four-year high school. In 1915 there were fifty-three in Bunkerhill High School, while today the enrollment has increased to seventy-seven in the four-year course. In 1908 the school became part of the Barnes plan.<sup>1</sup>

The Barnes School Law, 1908, affected all the high

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1. Bunkerhill High School. Senior Class. The Daisy, 1915.

schools in the county by providing to some extent for their financial support. This legislation has assisted very materially in the establishment and maintenance of high schools in the county. With this impetus the high schools gained in scope and prestige after the enactment of the Barnes legislation.

Table I, in the Appendix, gives a list of names of Russell County School Superintendents and their tenure of office from 1873 to the present time.

The names of all the Bunkerhill superintendents are not available, but Table II gives as complete a list of names as records indicate.

In general, the high school at Russell followed closely or preceded the work of Bunkerhill. Today the system is larger with over 1200 students in the grade and high school combined. The records for the superintendents seem to indicate the beginning of active high school work was around 1881 or 1882 (Table III, Appendix).

The third four-year high school was at Lucas in 1889. The school is small, with fewer than one hundred pupils in average daily attendance. A list of the superintendents from 1889 to 1939, inclusive, is given in Table IV.

As was the case with the other schools, Luray High School began much later than high schools in the eastern section of Kansas. It was not until 1907 that the school had a four-year course. A ninth grade had been added during

the late nineties, but it assumed little importance. In course, this high school is similar to the rest. Its enrollment now is ninety-two. A list of superintendents for the Luray schools is given in Table V, Appendix, from 1907 to the present time.

In 1908 Waldo began its four-year high school with an enrollment of fourteen students. Following the regular course, its average daily attendance is now sixty. Its superintendents, from 1908 to the present time, are listed in Table VI, page 63.

At Gorham is located the only Catholic High School in the county. Other than the date, no information is available prior to 1923, when there were sixty students in both grade and high school. In addition to the regular work of high schools, it provides religious instruction. Some effort is made to provide commercial subjects. Only twenty-seven students are now enrolled in the high school. A list of administering officers, from 1921 to 1940, is presented in Table VII, page 64.

The first of the Rural High Schools was established at Dorrance on May 31, 1917, with the election board consisting of Henry Steinle, Director; Amos Veverka, Clerk; and George Whitmer, Treasurer. The original enrollment is not known but for two years the school was conducted at Reiff's Hall. At the beginning of the second year the enrollment was fourteen, but since then it has grown to sixty. A list of

superintendents, from 1917 to 1940, is given in Table VIII of the Appendix.

The second of the rural high schools was established at Paradise on June 10, 1922. The board consisted of C. A. Zimmerman, George Green, and George Morill.<sup>1</sup> Previously this school had attempted to function as a town high school. In 1908 it began its high school career with three pupils but this phase of the work never assumed great importance. At the election changing the school, the vote was one hundred eighty-seven to eighty-one. In 1939 there were only thirty-nine students enrolled. Table IX, page 66, lists the principals for the years 1922 to 1939, inclusive, at Paradise.

The third of the rural secondary schools was another transformation in 1931, when the election changed the character of the Waldo school. It has had only one superintendent, Carl P. Wanasek. The board members chosen then were R. E. Wyckoff, William Austin, LaVern Ekder.

With the exception of the one small two-year high school at Fairport, on which no information is available, all the high schools of Russell County meet the classification requirements for their size on university entrance. In English, foreign language, science, and mathematics, they meet the standards. Probably too much emphasis is

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1. Russell County Superintendent. Official Records, 1931-1939.



given to the academic field, for in the county few pupils are able to continue their education beyond the high school level. The question then arises, what is done to provide the social background and contacts for community life? Because the schools are small, with the exception of Russell, there must necessarily be interschool activities to bridge the gap of lack of social contact within the school. A fine athletic program was developed, though it has been retarded somewhat by the depression. With the exception of Russell, and possibly Lucas and Luray, the high schools are too small to actively participate in football, but in basketball, baseball, and track, all compete. The population is sports-minded and willing to support the athletic program.

The two largest schools had, until the depression, year books and weekly student papers. These tended to impress the pupils with the value of achievement. To the average boy or girl few things are more pleasing than to see his or her name in print.

Debating, vocal and instrumental groups, and dramatic presentations tend to bridge the gap between the community and the isolation of the school. Frequently, the school is forgotten in the press of other problems because it provides no stimulation for community interest. In Bunkerhill and Russell, particularly, the school is the center of the community. It is not uncommon to find soloists provided by the schools for clubs, entertainments, and even political

meetings. In brief, the school is the nucleus around which the social life of the community revolves.

On the other side, the community has contributed to the schools by providing an active Parent-Teachers' Association. As early as 1921, Bunkerhill had an active chapter of the P. T. A. Functionally this organization purports to establish better relations between the school and home in the solution of the mutual problems of each. In theory and generally in practice, this arrangement has worked admirably. It is unfortunately true that this organization in a small school may find an apparent weakness which it makes a major issue. The work of the Russell County P. T. A. in providing better schools has been commendable.

This, in brief, is a picture of our schools, which will be considered in greater detail in the conclusion of this work. What of the instructors remains as a further problem.

As has been the case so often, the instructional force is the first to feel the whip hand of depression. In 1921 agitation for reduction of taxes through salary cuts was begun in Bunkerhill and echoed throughout the county.<sup>1</sup> The subject load has been consistently increased. Each instructor has been expected to handle more subjects than formerly. It is true that the county has been hard hit by the drought and the depression, but it is also true that the instructors have been rarely rewarded adequately. Unfortunately,

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1. Bunkerhill Advertiser, February 6, 1922.

contract terms and salary schedules for all years are not available, but the trend is indicated in Tables XII and XIII of the Appendix. The comparison of 1905 and 1939 is both enlightening and distressing. The teacher's work in Russell County is generally pleasant, but some real effort is made in the high schools to secure positions for home town teachers, even though competent instructors have been employed. This condition results, in part, from the fact that school boards are primarily local people interested in local problems and local prospects. The desire to see that money remains within the community is not an unusual one. Since the boards have power to employ and dismiss at will, it seems certain that teacher-tenure will remain a highly precarious factor dependent upon home town needs.

An interesting summary of the county is provided in the Kansas Educational Directory for 1939. In Russell County there are seventy-four districts with one hundred thirty-five teachers directly under the County Superintendent. In 1939 there were fifty-five one-teacher districts but only forty-five one-teacher districts operating with an enrollment of five hundred fifteen pupils and an average mill levy of 3.34 mills of property tax. Two teacher districts, twelve with thirty-seven teachers, an enrollment of five hundred sixty-one, and a mill levy of 3.62. The rest of the schools fall within the categories of towns and villages.

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1. County Superintendent, Russell County. Educational Directory for 1939. pp. 14-15.

In assessed valuation a tremendous difference exists in the school property. Russell, with a valuation of \$6,445,083, leads the list, while one of the one-teacher districts is valued at less than \$74,287.<sup>1</sup>

Despite the disparity in mill levy, ranging from 3.32 to 7.15, the schools seem to get along fairly well with the additional resources which are obtained from fines, licenses, forfeits, and sales tax revenues. These, too, seem to benefit the more wealthy communities more than the smaller, less prosperous villages and towns.

Though terms of school are now fairly uniform in accordance with school law, the following explanation of tables found in the Appendix reveals some interesting facts. First, Table X, showing the mill levies of 1904, will prove the great difference between property taxes for school purposes. Second, the table of contract lengths (Table XI) for the same year should be instructive, for it will demonstrate the variance in educational opportunity. Third, Table XII, the table on salaries, will show the wide difference in returns for the teacher in that year. Fourth, Table XIII, the table of present salaries, will explain the dissatisfaction over salaries of the present year. A comparison of the salary tables is conclusive evidence that the salaries have not kept pace with the rise in other fields, nor have they kept even with the cost of commodities.

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1. County Superintendent, Russell County. Educational Directory for 1939. pp. 14-15.

## CHAPTER IV

## Summary and Conclusions

The building of the new railroad to the Pacific Coast produced a profound impulse in men to migrate along its territory. Such a migratory movement brought the earliest pioneers to Russell County. They were part of the vast man power released by the conclusion of hostilities between the North and the South. Their new home, semi-arid though it was, offered a new chance for security and prosperity. Drought and insect plague seemed only to serve as temporary barriers to their inflexible wills. They chose to produce a more abundant life from their herds and flocks. Wheat, corn, and oats provided, together with the range, ample food for live stock. This source of revenue soon proved itself most productive. Sheep gave way to cattle as cash producers, as the latter proved more hardy and more profitable. From agriculture and its associated occupations Russell County developed a wealth per capita in excess of that of the average of the whole state.

The farmer has had his difficulties since the World War, but agriculture was not the only source of income for the inhabitants of Russell County. Oil fields were found in 1923, and these served as an active form of revenue for the



citizens. From the more than one thousand wells the county has derived much of its needed funds. The oil has furnished a bulwark against the drought and depression of agriculture.

Russell, the County Seat, and Bunkerhill formed the principal centers of communication and expansion. The former secured its position as home of the government after a heated contest with its smaller rival. Bunkerhill has remained small, but Russell has become a second-class city with more than twelve hundred pupils enrolled in its schools.

Politically, the county has remained faithful to a commission form of government. The government in this respect is similar to many others throughout the state.

Like the county government, the schools followed a traditionally orthodox course. The education of the youth was left to teachers whose salaries were paid by subscriptions from their students. The duration of the school year was never more than a few months. The instructors were, as we now measure training, incompetent, but for their time they seem to have accomplished good results. The early private enterprises were replaced by public schools which were open to all the children of the district. These schools, too, were in session for only a few months, at most, during the year.

Completion of the eighth grade was deemed an ideal to be attained. No effort was made to promulgate secondary

education before 1880. Even then, the attempts at high school education were feeble. As we now judge work, no high school graduation was valid, for none of the schools provided adequate training for university entrance prior to 1887.

The number of students who finished either grade or high school before 1900 was limited. Elementary schools graduated less than a score in 1890, but their total rose sharply during the next decade.

The appeal of the high school was directed solely to the prospect for the professions. As an entry way to college, Russell County high schools fulfilled their function well after 1900. During the next fifteen years the total number of students who finished the four-year course was small, but the total enrollment was also slight. Since 1915 the enrollment of the high schools of the county has been doubled.

The schools have tended to serve as an integrating force within the community. They have provided some stimulus toward a truly democratic participation in community affairs. Through social functions and extra-curricular activities the schools have made a direct appeal to the student whose chances for further education are slight. Athletics, music, and art have played a part, but home economics and commercial subjects have served as a potent force to keep the children in school until graduation. The community, too, has been brought into closer contact with the schools through the organization of

Parent-Teacher Associations. More and more the community and school have tended to work together. The old isolation of practical affairs from school concerns is less evident than formerly.

This new alignment may be due to several causes, but whatever the reason the result is beneficial. The wider dissemination of education may have brought a greater consciousness of the complementary nature of community and school. The increase of taxes to meet educational needs may have touched a vulnerable spot within the property holder which has aroused his interest in the schools. The greater attempt to build a program which would appeal to all may have stimulated public interest in education. The growth of intelligent public relations may have come to fruition. Whatever the cause, the schools should feel grateful, for only through public realization of their needs can the schools hope to find their work approved and supported.

As the curriculum has gone through a transition, so, too, has the teacher training expanded. In the early years of the county, teachers were chosen by a three-man board consisting of the County Superintendent and two teachers. The examinations were as extensive as the education of the examiners would admit. The qualifications were not uniform. The whims of the examining board determined the fitness of the applicant. County and district institutes served to stimulate growth in the teacher.

Graduation from the eighth grade seemed to be the generally accepted criterion for employment of teachers. Little attempt was made to improve this condition except for various institutes which were annually conducted. Nor was there much inducement to attend the Normal Schools. Salaries were lamentably small, averaging less than forty dollars monthly in 1905. Contracts, too, were limited in duration ranging from five to nine months, thirty years after the inception of public education in the county.

Since 1905 improvements have come to the teaching profession. Contracts are more nearly uniform and training is standardized. In the towns, and in all the high schools, college degrees are essential parts of preparation for teaching. The salaries, however, are still small. For all the teachers of the county, the average income is about six hundred dollars annually. Only two persons received more than two thousand dollars during the past year as compensation for school services.

Support for the schools is not so unequal as formerly, but property taxes still vary widely. In 1905 the mill levy ranged from zero to twenty mills. Today the levy begins at three and thirty-two hundredths mills for one teacher districts to seven and one-quarter mills for Bunkerhill.

Both text books and teaching method have improved since the beginning of Russell County schools. The former consisted of a heterogeneous collection of books, while the absence of

the latter led to the formation of procedural rules by the State Superintendent in 1873. He recommended suitable texts, and formulated a routine methodology which impressed logically organized subject matter upon the pupil. The method may have been widely used, but school boards asserted their independence by choosing, or failing to choose, books for the schools.

These governing boards have consisted, since the formal organization of the schools, of tax payers who have guarded the destinies of education with one eye on the purse. In their field, the boards are little rulers. They have the power of selection and dismissal of employees. They formulate school policy, and too often they tend to serve as administrators as well.

The most potent and the most exercised power of the boards of education is that of employing and dismissing instructors. An examination of the records reveals that teachers rarely remain many years in one position. In the rural districts the similarity of names of members of the board and teachers suggests more than mere coincidence.

The districts are, as we have reiterated so often, small. The emphasis is upon low tax rates and independence. There seems to be little cooperation between the various districts. This independence extends to all branches of education. Even the method of keeping records is not uniform.



Here, at least, much needed improvement should occur. Uniform and standardized records would aid immensely in evaluating the school system.

To even a superficial glance, certain things seem evident. The schools in Russell County need to emphasize more vocational work. Most of the students will never attend college, but they are subjected to a rigid routine of academic studies. The school must exercise a greater function than college preparatory courses will allow. It must be the center and core of community growth. This function can best be served by providing a rich social program together with plenty of vocational and commercial subjects.

No one would seriously recommend that academic courses be discarded, but since necessity will force the students to toil with their hands, it would seem fair to provide them with some preparation for the work which they must assume. In this respect the Rural High Schools seem to be meeting the needs of their patrons much more adequately than the rest of the educational institutions in the county.

Another very obvious weakness is the small size of the rural districts. Consolidation seems to be undesired. Perhaps the individualism of the boards makes them reluctant to consider this improvement. By consolidating several of the small country schools, the pupils would be benefited. A rich social contact could be established which would improve the child's chances in high school and life. The

failure to enlarge the small elementary school has led to the belief that country children are shy. Their opportunities are so limited frequently that they do not readily adjust themselves to larger numbers. Nor would the pupil be the only beneficiary; the economies brought by larger purchases and single building maintenance might serve to offset the cost of transportation. The type of instruction, too, would be improved, for a competent teacher could be employed where now two poorly trained instructors work. The meager salary could be increased so that competent people would be attracted to these positions.

The suggestion of consolidation is not limited alone to rural schools. It might well prove practicable in the high schools. Modern transportation and communication could provide the means for combining two or more of the smaller high schools into one compact and efficient unit.

Probably the most glaring defect in the whole system lies in its instability of tenure. An examination of the records reveals startlingly that the teachers use the schools as a stepping stone to marriage, a better job, or dismissal. Few of the instructors serve the same community for more than three or four years. This condition tends to create a feeling of insecurity and fear. Freedom to teach is always conditioned upon the belief that any unfortunate mistake might result in dismissal. The quality of teaching seems to rise in proportion to the amount of security. This

is true not only in Russell County but also true in every other county of the same type. For the best interests of all concerned, a more human program based upon indefinite tenure would prove a real stimulus to the school system.

Closely allied to the professional teaching problem is that of the administrator. With few exceptions, the superintendents have served fewer than five years. For the school, this may be an unfortunate procedure. Since it is the task of the superintendent to guide the educational policy of the school, this policy must oscillate like a pendulum with the frequency of administrative changes. A liberal educator would find it difficult, if not impossible, to carry out a constructive program in one or two years. Transformation of a school cannot be accomplished overnight. The initiative required will consume more than a year in showing tangible results. An efficient administrator can have little desire to improve his school when he realizes that previous men have been dismissed after a year or two of service. The best possible results may have been attained from the present conditions, but there can be little doubt that the schools would benefit from a uniform policy carefully administered for a long period of years. Growth in education is slow. One superintendent might be as willing to liberalize his school as another, but his methods might tend to disturb the smooth running program established by his predecessor whose desire was exactly the same.

These, then, are Russell County's schools. With one exception they are small, rural, and rather poor at present. Their weaknesses and benefits have been presented. In theory, the most liberal educators are far ahead of the general demands of the public for improvement; in practice, necessity forces them to remain somewhere behind the public wish. The system has shown steady though not rapid progress. The future will doubtless see more advances in the right direction. With the return of normal moisture, the county should again enjoy a measure of prosperity. Should this condition accompany a rise in oil prices, then Russell County would enjoy unparalleled prosperity and its schools would thrive luxuriantly.

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TABLE I  
 RUSSELL COUNTY SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENTS AND THEIR  
 TENURE OF OFFICE

Years service	Name
1873 - 1875	H. C. Hibbard
1875 - 1881	Ira S. Fleck
1881 - 1887	J. B. Corbett
1887 - 1889	J. J. A. T. Dixon
1889 - 1895	J. R. Bickerdyke
1895 - 1901	E. O. Humes
1901 - 1913	T. W. Wells
1913 - 1921	C. A. Bodmer
1921 - 1933	Pearl Comer
1933 - 1939	Floyd Wright
1939 -	Mary Wright, appointed to fill out term
1939 -	Hobart Jackson, present encumbent

TABLE II  
 NAMES OF THE SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENTS AT BUNKERHILL,  
 KANSAS, FROM 1883 to 1940

Term	Superintendent
1883 - 1980	J. R. Bickerdyke, term lengthened 1888 to nine months
1890 - 1891	J. Groendyke
1891 - 1893	J. L. Shearer
1893 - 1895	H. Coover
1895 - 1896	Charles Elledge
1896 - 1903	J. R. Bickerdyke
1903 - 1906	E. R. Shearer
1906 - 1907	W. E. Connelly
1907 - 1908	Royal Brown
1908 - 1910	Carl Ostrum
1910 - 1912	J. C. Reed
1912 - 1913	A. Skedmore
1913 - 1914	F. S. Hagey
1914 - 1915	G. W. Thompson
1915 - 1921	A. R. Baldwin
1919 - 1921	W. C. Markley
1921 - 1923	Elmer Dressler
1923 - 1924	Everett Strout
1924 - 1926	D. C. Harrison
1926 - 1929	Don McIntyre
1929 - 1934	Marion Hottell
1935 - 1936	John Arnold
1935 - 1940	E. L. Dougherty *

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\*E. L. Dougherty, Superintendent, Bunkerhill, 1939

TABLE III  
 NAMES OF THE SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENTS AT RUSSELL,  
 KANSAS, FROM 1881 to 1940

Term	Superintendent
1881 - 1882	A. Fisher, one of four teachers
1882 - 1884	no record
1884 - 1885	C. H. French
1885 - 1892	L. A. Parke
1892 - 1898	R . F. Malaby
1898 - 1900	Edward L. Cowdrick
1900 - 1903	J. W. Gordon
1903 - 1905	T. A. Edgerton
1905 - 1906	J. N. Banka
1906 - 1912	N. U. Spangler
1912 - 1916	F. R. Aldrich
1916 - 1917	S. L. Soper
1918 - ?	H. A. Nelson
1918 - 1920	T. W. Wells
1920 - 1924	J. M. Carpenter
1924 - 1936	O. G. Rouse
1936 - 1939	C. D. Dean
1939 -	Thomas L. Iden *

\* Thomas L. Iden, Superintendent, Russell. 1939.

TABLE IV

NAMES OF THE SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENTS AT LUCAS,  
KANSAS, FROM 1889 to 1939 INCLUSIVE

Term	Superintendent
1889 - 1892	G. E. Delaney
1892 - 1893	H. W. Howes
1893 - 1894	J. C. Ruppenthal
1894 - 1895	H. C. Smith
1895 - 1897	Whitaker
1897 - 1898	F.M. Sage
1898 - 1899	Mrs. Bracken
1899 - 1900	Nichol
1900 - 1902	E. Mitchell
1902 - 1904	E. Robinson
1904 - 1907	T. W. Wells
1907 - 1908	I. E. Winkell
1908 - 1909	Bennett
1909 - 1910	C. E. Lewellyn
1910 - 1911	Mrs. Beeghly
1911 - 1913	J.K. Elwood
1913 - 1916	T. W. Wells
1916 - 1920	Alvin G. Gore
1920 - 1922	C. H. Cannon
1922 - 1923	Zumwalt
1923 - 1927	W. Carl Green
1927 - 1931	R. B. Gilkison
1931 - 1933	A. F. Whiznant
1933 - 1935	C. B. Wiley
1935 - 1937	C. E. Thuma
1937 -	M. L. Kirby *

\* M. L. Kirby, Superintendent Lucas, 1939.

TABLE V

NAMES OF THE SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENTS AT LURAY,  
KANSAS, FROM 1907 to 1940

Term	Superintendent
1907 - 1908	W. E. Connelly
1908 - 1909	Charles D. Wilson
1909 - 1910	Dora Wierman
1910 - 1912	H. E. Pierce
1912 - 1916	E. L. McGlaason
1916 - 1917	W. C. Markley
1917 - 1918	Louis Keeler
1918 - 1919	M. H. Hickman
1919 - 1920	W. H. Dreisbach
1920 - 1925	J. McBride
1925 - 1931	W. W. Bell
1931 - 1934	W. E. Niles
1934 - 1938	D. N. Klemm
1938 - 1940	M. H. Isaacson *

\* M. H. Isaacson, Superintendent, Luray, 1939



TABLE VI  
 NAMES OF THE SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENTS AT WALDO,  
 KANSAS, FROM 1908 to 1940

Term	Superintendent
1908 - 1912	Henry Gillett
1912 - 1918	C. L. King
1918 - 1919	W. W. Strite
1919 - 1920	O. E. Darby
1920 - 1921	O. M. Smith
1921 - 1922	W. C. Markley
1922 - 1923	W. C. McGuire
1923 - 1924	Frank Cunningham
1924 - 1926	Earl E. Brock
1926 - 1928	William Austin
1928 - 1932	Ray S. Wagner
1932 - 1940	Carl P. Wanasek *

\* Carl P. Wanasek, Superintendent, Waldo. 1939.

TABLE VII  
NAMES OF ADMINISTRATING OFFICERS, GORHAM CATHOLIC  
HIGH SCHOOL, FROM 1921 to 1940

Term	Superintendent
1921 - 1922	Sister Mary Domitilla
1922 - 1925	Father Charles Weber
1925 - 1927	Sister Mary Honoria
1927 - 1928	Father Charles Weber
1928 - 1929	Sister Mary Arcadius
1929 - 1930	Father Charles Weber
1930 - 1932	Sister Mary Rosina
1932 - 1940	Father Nicholas Peters *

\* Father Nicholas Peters, Superintendent, St. Mary's High School, Gorham. 1939.

TABLE VIII  
 NAMES OF THE SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENTS AT DORRANCE,  
 KANSAS, FROM 1917 to 1940

Term	Superintendent
1917 - 1918	Stella Mae Kuhn
1918 - 1920	A. G. Hettler
1920 - 1921	H. J. Brown
1921 - 1922	J. P. Callahan
1922 - 1924	M. T. Barnett
1924 - 1927	L. T. Perrill
1927 - 1928	William Richards
1928 - 1932	E. L. Dougherty
1932 - 1935	C. E. Thuma
1935 - 1937	Joe Mahoney
1937 - 1938	T. R. Rardin
1938 - 1940	W. L. Rowland *

\* W. L. Rowland, Superintendent, Dorrance Rural High School, 1939.

TABLE IX  
 NAMES OF THE SCHOOL PRINCIPALS AT PARADISE,  
 KANSAS, FROM 1922 to 1939

Term	Principal
1922 - 1923	Arthur Galloway, thirty students enrolled.
1923 - 1925	Walter Hunt
1925 - 1927	S. A. Maust
1927 - 1929	S. J. Neher
1929 - 1932	R. E. Anderson
1932 - 1936	A. D. Arnold
1936 - 1939	T. J. Mercer *

\* T. J. Mercer, Principal, Paradise Rural High School.  
 1939.

TABLE X  
THE MILL LEVY IN 1904, FOLLOWED BY THE NUMBER  
OF DISTRICTS ON WHICH THE LEVY WAS MADE

Levy	Districts
.00	5
2.5	1, without a teacher in either school
5	1
6	4
7	3
8	2
9.5	1
10	10
11	1
12	9
12.5      MEDIAN   *	2
13	2
13.5	1
14	3
15	14
16	1
17	1
18	2
20	7

\* Russell County Superintendent, Annual Compendium,  
p. 11. 1905



TABLE XII  
 SCHEDULE OF SALARIES PER MONTH  
 IN RUSSELL COUNTY 1905

Salary (in dollars)	Number of Teachers
\$ 35.00	17
37.50	2
40.00 <u>AVERAGE</u> *	30
42.50	3
45.00	14
47.50	2
48.00	1
50.00	10
55.00	3
65.00	1
70.00	3
100.00	1

\* Russell County Superintendent. Annual Compendium.  
 1905

TABLE XIII  
SALARIES OF TEACHERS AND ADMINISTRATORS  
RUSSELL COUNTY 1939

Salary Range (in dollars)	Number of Teachers
\$ 360	1
400 - 600	48
600 - 800	36
800 - 1000	32
1000 - 1200	20
1200 - 1400	10
1400 - 1600	16
1600 - 1800	3
1800 - 2000	1
2700	1
3200	1

Mean salary 1939, between \$600 - \$800 yearly.  
With no exceptions, the salaries above \$1000 are  
for high school teachers and administrators. \*

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\* County Superintendent. Russell County Educational Directory. pp. 1939.

## DATA COVERING THE YEARS 1885 TO 1939

No. of District	Pupils Enrolled	Total Cost of School	Cost per pupil enrolled
1	7,223	\$ 335,690.60	\$ 46.47
2	5,343	107,186.54	20.06
3	9,251	468,118.55	50.71
4	1,601	32,578.72	20.34
5	7,817	1,632,332.49	58.68
6	2,170	59,277.71	27.31
7	1,488	21,603.97	44.27
8	5,108	162,202.04	31.75
9	1,857	63,589.12	34.24
10	999	28,346.83	63.65
11	8,453	568,849.23	67.34
12	1,031	46,654.36	46.23
13	3,573	115,263.80	32.23
14	1,535	54,550.83	35.53
15	884	26,789.89	30.30
16	812	26,245.35	32.32
17	771	23,686.53	30.72
18	1,337	34,512.84	25.79
19	1,180	27,738.12	23.50
20	575	21,243.71	36.94
21	1,331	33,829.71	25.41
22	1,095	35,495.79	32.41
23	879	28,772.42	32.73
24	1,472	26,281.31	17.85
25	1,128	50,807.17	45.04
26	998	28,975.90	29.02
27	1,129	26,278.21	25.52
28	573	25,954.70	45.29
29	916	28,817.24	31.45
30	823	28,092.58	34.13
31	1,190	27,808.62	23.36
32	936	30,170.46	32.23
33	706	23,751.54	33.64
34	1,271	26,917.93	21.17
35	Not organized		
36	932	29,755.69	31.92
37	1,048	28,129.61	26.84
38	908	27,255.14	29.98
39	963	30,353.12	31.55
40	979	26,736.40	28.12
41	1,782	28,086.69	15.75
42	2,462	43,810.51	17.79
43	1,097	35,415.56	32.20
44	995	28,200.39	28.34
45	2,149	37,222.00	17.32

No. of District	Pupils Enrolled	Total Cost of School	Cost per pupil enrolled
46	1,530	\$ 28,878.24	\$ 18.87
47	Not organized		
48	2,865	229,020.18	79.94
49	Not organized		
50	1,935	134,677.02	69.60
51	693	32,248.50	46.53
52	1,267	30,398.64	23.99
53	791	36,032.66	38.66
54	749	32,321.86	43.14
55	866	26,744.91	30.88
56	852	23,512.65	27.59
57	703	29,758.58	42.33
58	1,126	37,209.10	33.04
59	1,731	84,372.70	48.74
60	668	28,611.61	42.68
61	1,099	29,664.16	26.99
62	421	16,784.62	39.39
63	3,279	110,878.20	33.81
64	Not organized		
65	695	28,000.24	41.77
66	588	22,357.51	38.02
67	199	6,977.27	35.06
68	1,000	30,597.53	30.60
69	1,697	26,862.31	18.02
70	992	26,342.62	26.55
71	365	16,907.04	40.63
72	491	20,007.90	40.75
73	243	16,129.78	66.50
74	534	27,533.25	51.56
75	379	14,461.75	38.15
76	446	18,912.16	42.42
77	383	18,886.05	49.31
Totals	137,357	\$5,786,622.97	Av. = \$42.12
RURAL HIGH SCHOOLS			
1	1,219	\$ 263,031.14	\$215.77
2	586	193,450.76	330.12
3	405	53,432.66	131.93
Totals	2,210	\$ 479,914.56	Av. = \$225.94
Grand Totals	139,567	\$6,296,537.53	Av. = \$45.11





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